The mission of the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department is to offer the highest quality, contemporary education in electrical and computer engineering at the undergraduate and graduate levels and to perform research appropriate to the technical needs of Alaska, the nation and the world.

Computer engineering is a relatively new discipline. It lies somewhere in the middle between computer science, which covers theory, algorithms, software, networking, graphics and computer architecture, and electrical engineering, which covers microelectronics, electrical circuits and devices, networks, communications systems, computer architecture, hardware design and systems analysis. Computer engineers design, analyze, produce, operate, program and maintain computer and digital systems. They apply theories and principles of science and mathematics to the design of hardware, software, networks and processes to solve technical problems.

Over the past decade, computers have evolved into complex systems that may consist of single machines or many interconnected computers linked by a data network. In one form or another, computers now control most telephone and communications systems, process control and manufacturing automation systems, management information systems, household appliances, automobiles, transportation systems and medical instrumentation. Computers also form the core of the Internet. To work in the constantly evolving discipline of computer systems engineering, the computer engineer must acquire competence in both digital computer hardware and the fundamentals of software engineering.

Careers in computer engineering are as wide and varied as computer systems themselves. Systems range from embedded computer systems found in consumer products or medical devices; control systems for automobiles, aircraft and trains; to more wide-ranging applications in telecommunications, financial transactions and information systems.

The faculty of the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department provide a positive learning environment that enables students to pursue their goals in an innovative program that is rigorous and challenging, open and supportive. The B.S. program develops practical skills by emphasizing hands-on experience in the design, implementation, and validation of electrical systems in an environment that fosters and encourages innovation and creativity. This approach builds the foundation for the program’s educational objectives:

1. Breadth: Graduates will use their broad education emphasizing computer engineering as the foundation for productive careers in the public or private sectors, graduate education, and lifelong learning.
2. Depth: Graduates will apply their understanding of the fundamental knowledge prerequisite for the practice of and/or advanced study in computer engineering, including its scientific principles, rigorous analysis and creative design.
3. Professional skills: Graduates will apply skills in clear communication, responsible teamwork, professional attitudes and ethics needed to succeed in the complex modern work environment.

These objectives serve the department, college and university missions by ensuring that all graduates of the program have received a high quality, contemporary education that prepares them for a rewarding career in computer engineering.